

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable consideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-102 are currently pending in this application, Claims 1-34 and 46-84 having been withdrawn from further consideration as being drawn to non-elected species, Claims 35, 42 and 44 having been amended and new Claims 85-102 having been added by way of the present Amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 35-45 were rejected under 35U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Neil et al. (US 6,570,143).

Amended Claims 35, 42 and 44 and new Claims 85-102 are fully supported by the specification, drawings and claims as originally filed. Claims 85-95 are identified as readable on the elected Species c.

Briefly recapitulating, Claim 35 is directed to a projection-optical-system adjusting method with which to adjust a projection optical system used in an exposure apparatus. The method includes obtaining information on a wave-front aberration of a projection optical system whose specification is determined with using one of a wave-front aberration amount and a value corresponding to a wave-front aberration as a standard. The projection optical system is adjusted based on the obtained information on a wave-front aberration and Zernike Sensitivity corresponding to exposure conditions for an object.

Neil et al. disclose wave-front measurement. However, Neil et al. neither disclose nor suggest that a projection optical system is adjusted based on information on a wave-front aberration of the projection optical system and Zernike Sensitivity corresponding to exposure conditions for an object, the projection optical system being used in an exposure apparatus and a specification of the projection optical system being determined with using one of a wave-front aberration amount and a value corresponding to a wave-front aberration, as a

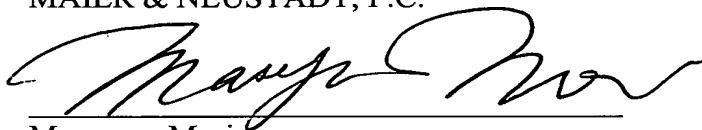
standard. Accordingly, Neil et al. are not believed in any way to anticipate the specific features recited in Claim 35. Therefore, Claim 35 is believed to be allowable.

Substantially the same arguments as set forth above with regard to Claim 35 also apply to dependent Claims 36-45 and 85-95, which depend directly or indirectly from Claim 35. Accordingly, each of the dependent claims is also believed to be allowable.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance and an early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,  
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



Masayasu Mori  
Attorney of Record  
Registration No. 47,301

Customer Number

**22850**

Tel: (703) 413-3000

Fax: (703) 413 -2220

(OSMMN 06/04)

MM:JM

I:\USER\MSMOR\NIKON\219587\219587\_AME.DOC